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The Black Man's Burden



Mrs Nannie C. Goode

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By NANNIE C. GOODE

WAITING AT THE PORTAL

A lonely traveler,
An ebon-hued man bound for Freedom's Heights,
Came to a portal on his way and stopped.
Three centuries of hardships stretched out behind him,
O'er the way he came across Columbia's strand,
Like the furies of hell.
Above the portal the weary traveler read:
THE GATE OF JUSTICE. THIS WAY TO FREEDOM'S
HEIGHTS.

But the portal was closed!

Foot-sore and bruised
And with eyes that burned with a fire lit
By persecution's torch, the black man knocked
And feigned would have entered;
But the keeper, stern and high-browed,
(Perched well in his seat above), said:
"Negroes debarred. Stand aside, and let the people pass!"
And
KEPT the portal closed!

Then the erstwhile son
Of Afric's sunny clime grew faint
And wholly sick at soul—
Great God! He saw the gate of Justice, ponderous and
wide,
Swing back and a great motley throng pass through
To Freedom's Heights.
The anarchist and bolshevist e'en went through to
Undermine Democracy on freemen's blood-bought soil!
Then the portal was closed!

With tearless eyes

The traveler wept as few men ever did.

In his hands were papers declaring his fitness to enter—

No traitor had he been in the days of bondage;

Neither was he a shirker when his shackles were broken.

Loyalty! That was his watchword

From the Jamestown landing to the place he stood;

Loyalty in heart and in deed—

Yet the portal was closed!

.
Many years have flown

And many changes have been wrought in our fair land

For man's happiness and betterment:

Humane laws have been enacted; sermons preached on
love;

Prayers said for the downtrodden in other lands

While thousands of lives and millions of dollars were laid
on the altar.

Truly

America's heart is large, and her arm of mercy long!

Only the dusky freedman of the tainted Hamitic strain,
is overlooked.

To Freedom's Heights he still begs admittance—

AND—THE PORTAL IS CLOSED!

A CRY FROM THE WILDERNESS

Out of the wilderness a low crooning voice
Rode on the zephhrs serene.

'Twas a woman's voice and 'twas sad, so sad
That she had known trouble, I ween.

As the zephhrs moved onward, the voice sadder grew;
Then a heart-rending wailing was heard;
And the zephhrs in sympathy murmured so loud,
That the wind in his lair was stirred.

"What's the matter?" he asked, Whose heart's been torn?
And whence comes that cry of pain?
If a soul's tortured, I'll seek its balm
For too long already I've lain."

The zephhrs whispered and folded their wings,
And the loud blustering wind at their side
Blew and blew, till there were many who knew
That one in the wilderness cried:

A Negro woman cried there in chains,
And her captor was an Anglo-man,
So said the wind as he blew on his way
Across Columbia's strand.

And the wind said, too, that the Anglo-man
Cared naught for that woman save
That she satisfy a wicked lust
Which in his heart did rave.

E'en the fruit of his sin, in whose veins ran HIS blood,
As well as that of the woman in bonds,
Had the fate of her mother as beside her she stood,
Said the wind as he blew on his rounds.

How the wind did howl as he poured forth this tale;
His fury was awful to see;
Yet all was for naught—it seemed that none cared
To set that woman free.

True, men were there of her own swarthy skin;
But no succor dared they to give,
For the Anglo-man had a mighty band
Who decreed just who should live.

O, wind, blow on—blow loud and long;
Keep blowing and telling your tale.
My sister's lot in that sinful clime
Is sad. Blow on and bewail!
Surely, there are Christly souls who'll hear,
Some where in this gospel land,
And haste away to the wilderness
To rout the Anglo-man.

The Negro woman's a soul to save
As well as her sister more fair;
And she has a virtue to be counted more dear
Than are jewels, precious and rare.
God gave her a heart that He want to be clean,
And a mind to unravel His laws—
She was not created to gratify sin,
But to live for a nobler cause!

O, wind, blow on—blow loud and long;
Keep blowing till you are a gale;
Down in the wilderness that woman still cries—
Blow on, O wind, and bewail!!

THE BLACK MAN'S BURDEN

Take up the black man's burden,
Hark, men, to duty's call!
The white man bears his trials,
Why should you lag and fall?
Have you not sons and daughters
With souls all good and fair,
To train for higher service,
Through ardent work and prayer?

Take up the black man's burden,
If you would win the race;
The odds are all against you
For the color of your face.
"The black man's not my equal,"
One angry brother cries,
"And gatling guns shall greet him,
If e'er he wills to rise."

Take up the black man's burden,
Though dark may seem the way;
Think not your cause a lost one,
Because of what men say.
There is a God above us
Who notes the sparrow's fall,
And He sees all His children,
And hears the weakest call.

Take up the black man's burden
And work and pray and wait;
Go gather up the weak ones
(Upon whom hangs your fate)
And help to train their children;
Teach them the way to go—
You cannot gain the victory,
While they grope on below.

Take up the black man's burden,
Show to the world you can
Take care of all your problems
Like any other man.
Build up your schools and churches;
Make homes for orphans poor;
To wayward creatures, wandering,
Point out an open door.

Take up the black man's burden,
In unity stand firm;
Watch ever in the distance,
Lest, cometh there a worm
To eat in your foundation,
To mar your priceless care;
Then, steal away in darkness,
And gloat on your despair.

Take up the black man's burden,
Each race has one to bear;
Though rocky is the pathway,
Ask none your load to share.
The darkest of the night hour,
Comes just before the day;
So gird your loins on brother,
And press along the way.

Take up the black man's burden,
If you'd be strong to fight,
Let love run out among you,
And strive to do the right.
Walk close in Jesus' footsteps,
In sweet humility;
HIS way means heav'nly glory,
And earthly liberty.

THE GOSPEL SHIP

Up and down, up and down,
Ship on the billowy sea;
Sail, sail, all the world round,
Where ever a heathen may be.
Haste with the message of Love o'er the wave—
O, millions are needing its power to save!

Sail, sail, O ship, sail on
Spreading the gospel flame;
Sail, and rest neither night nor morn
Till all shall have heard His name.
Millions are dying in sin without God—
O, haste to their rescue and give them the Word!

Speed on thy errand, O, ship, up and down;
Mind not the restless sea;
Neither have fear of a shock or sound;
God thy protector will be.
Surely, He loveth His children the same!
Go, gospel ship, that Love to proclaim!

Tell it forth, tell it forth;
Tell of the life He gave!
Go East, West, South and North
Seeking lost souls to save.
When every creature has heard of His love,
Then to the earth will He come from above!

Haste away, O, haste away—
Let every sail be free!
Go, go, by night and by day
Far over the surging sea.
Fill up the fold with sheep now astray;
Hasten His coming; O, ship, haste away!

DUTY'S CALL

Written for an alumni meeting at Boydton Bible
and Academic Institute, Boydton, Va.

Time, so fleeting, fast and fleeting,
Stay, O stay thy winged flight;
Hearts are beating—faint, yet beating
For the parting scenes tonight.

They are coming, swiftly coming;
Each hour brings them hastening near,
While a humming, soft low humming,
Vainly tries each heart to cheer.

Then the singing, clear sweet singing,
Does its part to cheer the night
That this winging, ah, too winging,
Time is spoiling in its flight.

We are going, yes we're going
Out beyond these sacred walls
To our sowing—life-time sowing,
In the fields where Duty calls.

Duty's calling, loudly calling;
And we've come to say farewell
With tears falling, sad tears falling
In a grief we cannot tell.

We have duties, bounden duties;
There is work for each to do;
And these duties, God-given duties
Lead midst false as well as true.

Yet we are workers—chosen workers
In the vineyard of our Lord;
So no shirkers, no mean shirkers
In our band can we afford.

Like the Master—our dear Master,
We must do our given parts
And the faster—all the faster
Build God's kingdom in men's hearts.

Then He's coming—quickly coming;
Coming back to earth again.
How a summing, prayerful summing
In our hearts quickens our ken!

Christ is coming, surely coming—
Alleluia! saints rejoice!
Christ is coming—really coming,
Bringing with Him heaven's joys!

No more dartings—poignant dartings
In our hearts; O, praise His name!
No more partings—tearful partings;
All the years will be the same!

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